

★ news release

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RESULTS OF WINTER MISSISSIPPI FLYWAY SURVEY REPORTED  
BY THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

In surveying the Mississippi Flyway, 740 people covered 61,000 miles in 53 airplanes, 580 automobiles, and 25 boats. The 1963 Mississippi Flyway winter survey started January 7 and was completed January 15.

In reporting on the Mississippi Flyway count, the Department explained that the Midwinter Survey seeks information about winter habitat conditions and long-term waterfowl population trends. Because observers rely completely on a visual tally, it is not possible to make an actual count of all the waterfowl in the Flyway. Over several years, however, the survey does provide a general picture of population trends and for a very few species it also is a reliable head-count, the Department said.

The Midwinter information does not have a direct cause-and-effect relationship to the annual waterfowl hunting regulations, but the study is one of several sources of information used in setting hunting limits each year.

The extensive survey covers wintering areas of Mexico and Canada as well as all the States. It is coordinated by the Fish and Wildlife Service's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The entire job must be completed as soon as possible to guard against duplicate counts of birds that may move from one area to another.

On the first day of the survey, hundreds of waterfowl observers in the United States, Canada and Mexico climb into cars, boats and airplanes to see how many waterfowl of each species can be observed in the assigned areas. Men and equipment from the Fish and Wildlife Service, State game and fish departments, the United States Armed Forces, the Canadian Wildlife Service, fish and game departments of the Canadian Provinces, and private organizations cooperate in carrying out the important study.

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